(a) whether it is a fact that junior students in colleges are committing suicide due to ragging by senior students; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/to be taken by Government to prevent such suicides in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) No such case has currently come to the notice of the Central Government.

(b) The Government has taken note of the problem of ragging in Universities/Colleges. In order to explore the measures for curbing of ragging in Universities and Colleges, the UGC constituted an expert committee in September, 1999. The report of the expert committee was circulated to all universities for necessary action. The directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Civil Petition No. 656 of 1998 on curbing the menace of ragging in the educational institutions have also been circulated to all the State/UT Governments/universities for their strict compliance. The Commission has also invited the attention of the universities to the report of the committee constituted by I.I.T., Delhi on measures to curb ragging. AICTE has also issued instructions to all the State Secretaries (Technical Education) and Vice-Chancellors of Technical Universities for taking necessary steps to prevent ragging in the Institutes.

Elimination of gender disparity

2060. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UNESCO, among other nations, has called upon India to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether UNESCO proposes to extend financial help for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) and (b) The UNESCO conference of the World Education Forum held at Dakar in April, 2000, in which 164 countries, including India, participated and adopted, a Framework

for Action for Education for All. The six goals included in this Framework for Action are addressed to all member States, and not to India in particular. One of these six goals is aimed at "Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality".

(c) No Sir. UNESCO is principally not a funding agency.

(d) Does not arise:

Curriculum on Human Development

2061. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to introduce a course curriculum on human development in higher education;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the United Nations Development Programme in association with the Institute of Human Development and the Human Development Research Centre has formulated a course curriculum on human development; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Scholarships for school dropouts

2062. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the NCERT is considering to launch scholarship programmes to woo dropouts; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) and (b) The Scheme of National Talent Search (NTS) Scholarship for school dropouts has been introduced for a period of one year as a pilot project. The Scheme provides for 100 scholarships for children who have dropped from regular schooling after